

Water treatment

Water must be purified in a water treatment works before it is piped to our homes. This normally means straining or filtering it and treating it with chemical.

Water is treated for three reasons:

- to make it safe to drink
- to remove particles and make it clean
- to remove any unpleasant taste or smell

One way to treat water is to filter it twice - first through coarse sand and shingle, and then through fine sand. Any large particles in the water are trapped by the sand.

Minute organisms on the surface of the sand feed on bacteria in the water and help purify it further. Finally, a chemical called chlorine is added to kill any remaining bacteria.

Another way to remove particles from the water is to add a chemical called coagulant. This makes the fine particles in the water stick together in a thick mass.

